

NEK Food Cycle Coalition Meeting
March 13, 2018

Attending: Alison (NVDA), Laural (NVRH), Shannon, Paul (NEKWMD), Annie (Town of Lyndon), Lew (NVRH and KCS food shelf), Dixie (VT211), Ann (VT DEC),

Guests: Natasha Durante, Vermont Composting; Jennifer and Rachel NEWMOA: Americorp person

Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association MOA: Jennifer summarized the NEWMOA project: to raise awareness about food waste and composting, food safety, and gleaning.

The discussion focused on the outreach event in the Northern NEK featuring the documentary Wasted! Shannon has reached out to several venues, none have been confirmed. The target audience is retailers, consumers, agriculture, food shelves and meal sites. Ann said that VT DEC has maps that list the food shelves and meal sites. NEKWMD is planning to purchase the film. We discussed showing it mid-summer, but concluded fall may be better timing for the intended audience. Shannon envisions breaking the film into shorter segments with discussion after each. NEWMOA can help with outreach, refreshments, facilities fees, setting up a registration website, and purchase of the film. Alison asked about measures of success. Jennifer suggested a pre and post survey of those attending the showing.

There was a brief discussion about who the "panel of experts" might be; Nicole Civita was mentioned. Alison, Shannon, and Rachel will be the small core group planning this event: venue, panel, agenda, outreach and promotion. They will ask others for help as needed.

Update from Natasha Durante: Natasha heads the Composting Association of Vermont and is the Chair of the F2Plate Food Cycle Coalition. Natasha explained the brief history of the Food Cycle Coalition and the vision to divert food and other resources that would normally be wasted by multiple means including composting, and food and energy production. The coalition is made up of 15 organizations and state agencies including for profit businesses. One of their current projects is a joint meeting with Farmland Access and Stewardship Working Group to discuss what other states are doing in this field. They are also working with the VT Department of Agriculture on Act 250 and jurisdiction issues.

Natasha mentioned several upcoming events including a Composting Summit on April 5 in Randolph and the Slow Living Summit, part of the Strolling of the Heifers, on May 31 and June 1 in Brattleboro. Natasha also spoke about a Regional Food Access toolkit – a how to manual to support regional work. Natasha will be sending links to these events and resources. Look for them in a future email.

USDA Grant: Paul reported that he has 3 letters of support and needs 5. Organizations have been contacted about writing letters, so we should be able to meet the requirement. Paul reported that he and Shannon got all the required federal "numbers" needed to submit the grant. He needs help with the narrative for the grant and Alison offered to help. Susan Poland from USDA will give us feedback prior to submitted the grant if we get it to her by April 15. Paul feels he can do that. He will reach out the to Coalition if he needs more help or information.

There was a brief discussion on other state and national events and activities we may be able to partner with going forward. We could piggy back on those events and put our local spin on them.

We spoke briefly about stakeholder missing from this group – especially someone representing agriculture. Alex DePillis and Stephanie Smith from Department of Ag were mentioned. Lew also

mentioned Hisashi Kominami, he works for Dept of Ag and runs a farm in North Concord. Lew will reach out to him about joining the Coalition.

The next meeting is April 10.